

A review on experiential learning

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Recent developments in theory and research thrown light on the significance of on Experiential Learning(EL) that enhance understanding among the students. Many studies had evaluated its impact in the learning process of the students. One of the studies supports the proposition that the process of learning fundamental improvisation capability can be improved through experimental learning to generate better decision-making in uncertainty (Christopoulos, Wilner, & Bestetti, 1994). There are few things that cannot be learnt through mere reading a book or watching someone doing, such as swimming, cycling, decision making, Crisis management and so on. All such kinds of activities may only be learnt, being on the field by experimenting situations. Such experimental learning is vital for gaining wisdom. Hence, this research is intended to study the following objective: To review and understand different types of experimental learning methods. Both primary and secondary data had been used for the analysis.

Key words: Experimental learning, History- Types

I. INTRODUCTION

Knowing the fact that the attention span of the human being is declining to 8.25 seconds, it is a great challenge to encourage the students to listen with the traditional pedagogical method of lecturing. In laying efforts for making the teaching- learning process effective and engaging the students, emerged an

innovative pedagogy that results in deep meaningful learning, EL. EL is the process of learning by doing, which keeps the students engaged during the learning process. EL may include a variety of different instructional methodologies such as field work, internship, presentation, experiential education, and problem-based learning, to name a few. Although there is anecdotal and research evidence that illustrates, many of these methodologies are being applied, EL is still not widespread. Even more importantly, the assessment and evaluation tied to EL are less well-defined (Yates, Wilson, & Purton, 2015). The study was intended to understand the historical perspective of EL and to understand different types of experiential learning methods adopted different educational institutes.

II. DEFINITION OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The following are some of the definitions of experiential learning: The AACSB Task Force (1986) defined applied experiential learning as: A business curriculum-related endeavor which is interactive (other than between teacher and pupil) and is characterized by variability and uncertainty.

Rogers (1969), defined the essence of experiential learning as: It has a quality of personal involvement- the whole-person in both his feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event.

Hoover and Whitehead (1975), definition of experiential learning was given: Experiential learning exists when a personally responsible participant

cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally process knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes in a learning situation characterized by a high level of active involvement.

III. HISTORY OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

In 551-479 BC, the well known teacher, philosopher, and political theorist, Confucius had said "I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand", which symbolize that the importance of experiential learning in creating knowledge had been addressed centuries ago. In the 4th century B.C., Aristotle, one of the Philosophers, had stated that the theory is not understood until a person has the ability to apply it, by saying, "They are using the language of knowledge is no proof that they possess it." The notion of experiential education, or learning by doing, has a long history. Early on, outdoor educators embraced experiential education as a way of learning in the outdoors. Similarly, adventure education programs, which also take participants into the outdoors, use real-world experiences to achieve their learning goals.

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746 - 1827), a Swiss pedagogue and educational reformer, took up Rousseau's ideas, explored, developed and implemented. He insisted that children should learn through activity and through things, instead of dealing with words. The theory was later known as the 'Pestalozzi Method'.

John Dewey (1859-1952) an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer, who is known as the Father of experiential education movement, believed that students should be educated by involving them in real-life tasks and challenges.

Maria Montessori (August 31, 1870 – May 6, 1952), an Italian educator, scientist, physician, philosopher, feminist, and humanitarian believed that each child is born with a unique potential to be revealed, rather than as a "blank slate" waiting to be written upon. She insisted on "Scientific observation has established that education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment."

Kurt Matthias Robert Martin Hahn (5 June, 1886 - 14 December, 1974) was a German educator and a

significant contributor to many well-recognized, innovative experiential, social development, and outdoor education schools and programs. Key figure in the development of adventure education.

Jean Piaget (9 August 1896 – 16 September 1980) was a Swiss clinical psychologist known for his pioneering work in child development. He became intrigued with the reasons children gave for their wrong answers to the questions that required logical thinking. He believed that these incorrect answers revealed important differences between the thinking of adults and children.

Myles Horton (July 5, 1905 - January, 1990) was a popular American educator, insisted that if everyday people could come together to discuss problems and share their experiences, they could solve their problems. He strongly believed in peer education, in people becoming their own experts, doing their own research, testing their ideas by taking action, analyzing their actions.

Carl Ransom Rogers (January 8, 1902 – February 4, 1987) was an American psychologist who had distinguished two types of learning: cognitive (meaningless) and experiential (significant). The former corresponds to academic knowledge, such as learning vocabulary or multiplication tables and the latter refers to applied knowledge, such as learning about engines in order to repair a car. The key to the distinction is that experiential learning addresses the needs and wants of the learner. Rogers lists these qualities of experiential learning: Personal involvement, Learner-initiated, Evaluated by the learner and Pervasive effects on learner. He had also listed the following role of the teacher in facilitating students' learning. This includes: 1. Setting a positive climate for learning, Clarifying the purposes of the learner(s), Organizing and making available learning resources, Balancing intellectual and emotional components of learning, Sharing feelings and thoughts with the learners but not dominating.

David A. Kolb (born 1939) is an American educational theorist whose interests and publications focuses on experiential learning. Together with Roger Fry, David Kolb developed the Experiential Learning Model (ELM). This model is composed of four concrete elements, namely: Concrete experience, Observation and reflection on the concrete experience, Formation of abstract concepts based on the EL.

It was not until the 1970s that experiential education emerged as a recognized field of education, and in 1977 the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) was established. More recently, David Kolb has taken the gauntlet in support of experiential learning, stating that learning is multi-dimensional process. Beginning from concrete experience, to observation and reflection, then with the formation of abstract concepts and generalizations, to testing implications of new concepts in new situations. Many others have taken this model and expanded on it or used it to explain their theories. (Kolb, 2015)

In addition to the contribution of the from the above philosophers' contribution, it is also observed that the Experiential learning methodology had been adopted by the teachers since ancient Vedic period.

Ancient Indian Education had been evolved strictly on the foundations of Indian epistemological and philosophical traditions. The idea of the ephemerality of life and the world, the concept of ultimate death and the futility of mundane pleasures had provided them with a special angle of vision. The entire educational tradition originated with these principles. Thus, the Indian sages devoted themselves to the study of a Supra-sensible world and spiritual powers and moulded their life accordingly. The ultimate aim of education emerged as the *Chitti-Vrittinirodhab* (the control of mental activities connected with the so called concrete world). However, education did not neglect the development of the pupil's powers for his all-sided advancement. The following objectives were ascribed in the education system: Knowledge related to life, Close association between teacher and student resulted in all round development, Development in social work, Vocational training. Vocational education was also available free of cost during this period. Methods of learning, period of study and types of Teachers were unique in ancient India. Knowledge was passed on orally from one generation to another in ancient India. Education involved three basic processes, one, which included 'sravana' (stage of acquiring knowledge of 'shrutis' by listening). Two, 'manana' (meaning pupils to think, analyze themselves about what they heard, assimilate the lessons taught by their teacher and make their own inferences,) and three 'nidhyasana' (meaning comprehension of truth and apply\ use it in real life) (Chouhan, Apr 2016).

It is very obvious from their objectives, that the modern concept of *Learning by Doing* as understood in the West today, was the very core and essence of education in ancient India. Evidently, the ancient

Indian education was not merely theoretical, but was related to the realities of life. Life served as the laboratory for the educational experimentation from where many noble traditions were developed (Jayapalan, 2005).

During the Buddhist period, the method of education imparted was Verbal education, Discussion, Prominence of logic, Tours, Conference, Meditation in solitude. Vocational education was not ignored during the Buddhist system of education. The monks of Vihar were taught spinning, weaving and sewing in order that they meet their clothing requirement. They were taught architecture as well. Education in architecture enabled them to build up new Vihars or repair the old ones (Puri, 2009).

During the Medieval period the education system insisted on Religion education, Provision of various disciplines, Norms of conduct, Teacher-pupil relationship, Individualized instructions, monitorial system and Discipline. Provision was also made for vocational, technical and professional education (Puri, 2009).

India is emerging as a global power. Education has been the backbone of its growth and development. The Indian education system has been developed in a systematic manner after getting independence in 1947 from the British. As per the constitution of India, education is a 'concurrent' subject, that is, it is the joint responsibility of the central (federal) and state (provincial) governments. There are many statutory bodies facilitating the growth, such as the National Council Of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), University Grants Commission (UGC) and so on. The Education Policy lays emphasis on the following: Equity, Accessibility, Quality, Skill development and Entrepreneurship.

Initiatives have been taken by the Indian education system to keep in pace with the global trends. Developing online tutoring, Skill development programmes, international internships, Teacher training, Curriculum development and so on. The policies more stress on Education is linked to economic development (Brahadeeswaran, 2016). Newer teaching methods may incorporate television, radio, internet, multi media, and other modern devices. Inquiry learning is another modern teaching method. A popular teaching method that is being used by a vast majority of teachers is hands on activities. Hands-on activities are activities that require movement, talking, and listening, it activates

multiple areas of the brain. "The more parts of your brain you use, the more likely you are to retain information," says Judy Dodge, author of *25 Quick Formative Assessments for a Differentiated Classroom* (The old and new methods, 2016).

Since 2000 experiential learning theory research in these fields around the world has more quadrupled. A 2013 review of management education, research showed that 27 percent of the top cited articles in management education journals were about experiential learning and learning styles (Arbaugh, Dearmond, & Rau, 2013). The current experiential learning theory bibliographies include nearly 4,000 entries from 1971 to 2014.

Based on the above literatures, it is apparent that the term experiential learning may be new to us, however, the methodology had been adopted since the education system had been originated.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Review had shown that many experiments have been carried out by applying various experiential learning pedagogies, in various subjects.

A study was conducted in one of the courses, Project management, that course recognizes and aims to develop the technical, financial and legal knowledge and skills, and the specialist people's knowledge and practical process skills required to practice effectively as a project manager. The study describes the course and indicates a balance given in training to the academic analytical requirements and to the use of experiential learning and self-development exercises. These include indoor exercises aimed at developing knowledge of options, the use of questionnaires and the use of outdoor exercises at off-campus camps aimed at developing self- and other-awareness. Roughly 40 percent of the course is taught through a mix of experiential and lecturing presentation; the remaining 60 per cent is more traditional in the teaching of the legal and other technical and financial requirements. The results proved that using experiential and action learning, action research, adventure and wilderness experiences and related applied approaches had proved to be successful- when due preparation and implementation has occurred. Experiential learning approaches are sometimes seen as "soft" and "irrelevant" when compares to the traditional lecture approaches. However, the study with respect to the growth in personal and in knowledge that has resulted from the programme are consistent with the development of the educated practitioner makes a

contribution that goes beyond the normal, more theory-oriented, management programme which are commonly available (Hicks, 1996).

A survey examining various aspects of transfer of training was administered to graduates of a nationally recognized MBA program who have participated in an experiential learning course as part of learning their MBA. From the study, it is understood that motivation to transfer learning was significantly positively related to transfer of learning. The relationship between perceived utility and motivation to transfer learning was significantly and positively correlated. Performance self-efficacy assessed individuals' general belief that they are able to change their performance when they want to. It was predicted that if trainees believe they are able to change their performance they may be more likely to transfer a learned skill to another application (Juergens, 2012).

The preferences of students towards different teaching methods and the perceived effectiveness of experiential teaching methods in different operations management (OM) modules was studied. Design/methodology/approach – Student perceptions of different teaching methods and various aspects of an experiential teaching method, in the form of a business simulation game, are examined using survey data from 274 respondents in four small post-experience and two large pre-experience OM modules. The study revealed that traditional and experiential teaching methods are both popular with OM students, whilst independent teaching methods are less well liked. The analysis also shows that students on both kinds of OM modules perceive most aspects of the experiential teaching method used in this study (The Operations Game) very positively. The study also noted a number of challenges involved in using experiential teaching methods on both kinds of module (Piercy, Brandon-Jones, Brandon-Jones, & Campbell, 2012).

An innovative, experiential-learning project that incorporates students from two different courses: sales management and professional selling was carried out. Sales management students actually manage sales students on an outside sales project. Students apply classroom knowledge to a real-life sales project for a local community organization. Feedback from students on the project in the form of both open-ended course evaluation comments and quantitative course rating scores has been very positive. Students enjoy being able to apply what they learn in the classroom. Business professionals involved in the project, as well as those recruiting our

students, have voiced support for the project and have expressed appreciation for the value of the hands-on experience our students obtain. Students, in general, tend to perform better in the class and have a more positive outlook about the class. Final sales presentation scores improved from an average of 82.2 percent over the 5 years prior to the project to 85.5 percent during the project, using the same evaluation instrument. A review of course evaluations before and during the project also shows the positive impact of this innovative teaching method. Based on a 5-point scale, sales management course evaluations increased from an average of 4.32 for This experiential-learning project also gives students the chance to interact with business professionals in the community, which provides additional learning and networking opportunities (Chapman, Schetzle, & Wahlers, 2016).

Management studies have been criticized for lagging behind the actual needs of organizations, ignoring experiential dimensions. The issue has been addressed by applying experiential learning theory using an accountancy-oriented board game designed to help participants learn about cost management. The game was played on a pricey course we an enrollment of 104 accountancy students. The impact levels of game entertainment and comprehensibility on the course material comprehension as well as the game's impact on the final grade in the course were examined. Results show that game participants had significantly higher grades than students that did not participate in the game, and that entertainment and comprehensibility of the game predict the understanding of course material. This study also addressed the gap between traditional management education and practice. It provides empirical evidence of the value of hands-on gameplay experience for assimilation of course concepts and strategies. The results confirmed the importance of exposing players through an entertaining game simulation to challenges that arise in the business world (Eckhaus , Klein , & Kantor, 2017).

V. TYPES OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The following are some of the experiential learning methodologies followed in various institutes,

Apprenticeships: Apprenticeships provide students an opportunity to try out a job, usually with an experienced professional in the field to act as a mentor.

Clinical experiences: Clinical experiences provide hands-on experiences of a predetermined duration

directly tied to an area of study, such as nursing students participating in a hospital-based experience or child development and teacher education students participating in day care and classroom settings.

Fellowships: Provide tuition or aid to support the training of students for a period of time. They are usually made by educational institutions, corporations, or foundations to assist individuals pursuing a course of study or research.

Field work: Field work allows students to explore and apply content learned in the classroom in a specified field experience away from the classroom. Fieldwork experiences bridge educational experiences with an outside community that can range from neighborhoods and schools to anthropological dig sites and laboratory settings.

Internships: Internships provide students with an opportunity to test the waters in a career field and also gain some valuable work experience. Internships can be for credit, not for credit, paid, or unpaid.

Practicums: Practicums often a required component of a course of study and place students in a supervised and often paid situation. Students develop competencies and apply previously studied theory and content, such as school library media students working in a high school library or marketing majors working in a marketing research firm.

Service learning: Service learning is distinguished by being mutually beneficial for both students and community. Service-learning is growing rapidly and is considered a part of experiential education by its very nature of learning, performing a job within the community, and serious reflection by the student. Service-learning involves tackling some of society's complex issues such as homelessness, poverty, lack of quality education, pollution, etc.

Simulations and gaming/role-playing: When used as part of a course, simulations and gaming/role-playing aim to imitate a system, entity, phenomenon, or process. They attempt to represent or predict aspects of the behavior of the problem or issue being studied. Simulation can allow experiments to be conducted within a fictitious situation to show the real behaviors and outcomes of possible conditions.

Student teaching: Student teaching provides candidates with an opportunity to put into practice the knowledge and skills they have been developing in the preparation program. Student teaching typically involves an on-site experience in a partner school and opportunities for formal and

informal candidate reflection on their teaching experience.

Study abroad: Study abroad offers students a unique opportunity to learn in another culture, within the security of a host family and a host institution carefully chosen to allow the transfer of credit to a student's degree program.

Undergraduate research: Undergraduate research is increasingly common at universities across all disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

Volunteering: Volunteering allows students to serve in a community primarily because they choose to do so. Many serve through a nonprofit organization—sometimes referred to as formal volunteering—but a significant number also serve less formally, either individually or as part of a group.

Various clubs: Formation of various clubs such as Marketing, Finance, Entrepreneurship cells helps them to list out their own need and organize workshops, industry interaction. They will come to know about the experts in the field.

From the above review, it is very clear that the experiential learning proved to yield positive results in the learning of the students.

Experiential learning can result in various benefits such as

1. The concepts and data can be connected to the real life scenario while understanding, where as a student might tune out traditional classroom lectures as the subject cannot be related to real life
2. The art of practicing certain skills, strengthens the neural connections in our brains and makes us to have hands on experience in the subject matter.
3. The attitude towards learning can be improved as students see the fruit of their own labor, which in turn results in higher gratification and pride.

4. The Creativity of the students in carrying out certain task might be remarkable as they usually intend to always do something better than others.

VI. CONCLUSION

Experiential learning is the area which needs to be strengthened in order to have more independent management professionals. Students might learn the subjects in depth and retain more information as the subject matter pertains to them more personally.

The attitude of committing mistakes as part of learning should be encouraged among the student community. As Sir Richard Branson rightly said, "You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over."

It is undoubtful that if you learn the subject matter in a traditional way, it gets stored in your short term memory whereas if the same subject matter is practically experienced it might involve self-Initiation, self-assessment as well as hands on experience in the subject matter which may be retrieved later from the long term memory

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